

The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

Some Little Mothers

Whole books have been written about the "little mothers," as the years-old children are called that lift the burdens of younger children in families whose daily grinding poverty permits of respite. When one attends enthusiastic meetings where women with great, warm, loving hearts and souls wide open to meet problems of the day are met together for discussion on various and sundry subjects, there is an ache in the heart for the real burden and cry of the town. Think of the hours spent in developing minds along the "servant problem" and the "women question," and on through a long list of very important affairs, all of which are life but ceaselessly cut out a little beyond us is the small, bent and toiling figure of the small, girl, old—many centuries old—beyond her years. Perhaps she has a father, perhaps not, sometimes it is better that way. The family is impoverished and the mother works in a factory for a scant pittance that will scarcely cover the landlord's rent, to say nothing of coal and wood and food. They are not actually in want, they are not the "dead poor," but this little soul, with a bright, happy heart made for all the happiness and sunshine that God has given to others, must needs mind all the babies younger than herself and wash the clothes and prepare the food.

It is really true all around us, right here. One little girl, possibly ten years of age, certain or over that, takes care of three and four children. Their little chairs are drawn in a row up to the smoky old stove, and the very youngest baby sits small pieces of raw turnips from an old mug. All the while the "little mother" is boiling and washing the clothes and trying with all her child-like might to take the place of the woman toiling at the factory. One wonders that he doesn't come offener—the man with the unsmiling face that "carries the babies" away and pins with such accustomed fingers the narrow streamer of white ribbon against the door, all because of the ignorance of only the little girls trying to do the best they can, but the women who don't know how and have never had time to learn.

Why do we rave and rant over who was the greatest American poet and such, and all the threatening evils, real and imaginary, when the little children are growing up around our very doors with cramped, dwarfed bodies and cramped, dwarfed souls? It is not that the other is of no importance, but these little people are growing up some of these days not so very long after we may be gathered into the silence, and what chance in the world have they?

Did you read about it? The little girl in New York several years ago who had minded so many babies for so long a time with never a day of pleasure or even school, and they had made her stay at home to mind a small brother or sister while the rest went off for a day's holiday, and she killed the baby and went to the picnic.

Somebody has to help them. There are windows stuffed with a baby's soiled cap because a negligent landlord will not put in a pane of glass, and the houses are small and the walls thin and it is winter and they are children.

A Fairy Gift

At a dinner recently the men and girls were discussing what gift they would choose if the "good fairy" should be calling them out. Riches, looks, fascination—the whole gamut was run, until one brilliant young matron's turn. With a half laugh she said:

"If I could have but one gift of the gods, what would I take? A sense of humor."

The girl knew the secret of comfortable living. There is no situation so trying, no lot so hard that it cannot be lightened by the power to see the fun in it.

The humor sense is sometimes called dangerous and the sober sides even deem it frivolous. There is no greater safety, however, and the happy possession should deem himself blessed of the gods.

It is said few women own a real sense of humor. This is as false as most of the theories about our sex. A woman may not be able to see fun in the same things as does a man, but too many women are facing distressing conditions and actually getting the best of them to deny her this sixth and most precious sense. Lots of women think they have a sense of humor when they have only a dogged sort of "grim-and-bear-it" courage. It is much better to smile than to weep, to take life cheerfully, and keep on smiling, than to "chuck the job," but that is not the saving sense.

If you really have this sense of humor, and do not have to force a smile, you chuckle because you cannot help it. While doing the most impossible things, your thoughts will be bubbling over with the funny side of it.

Lots of women think they possess this sense because they can see a well-sharpened point to a joke—that is only perception, a quick wit. Others lay claim to the coveted possession when they can enjoy a joke at another's expense and realize how exasperatingly funny are the happenings of their friends.

The real sense of humor enjoys a joke just as much as its owner's expense as at her neighbors.

A Purple Gown

An admirable new winter model is of plum purple, with a straight, narrow skirt, trimmed below the knees with a deep fold of the material, piped with black satin. There are two evening panels at the back, which give a broad effect across the waist at the back. This, by the way, is one of the dominant features of this winter's styles, and will be seen on every kind of gown.

The coat is quite large and does not follow the slim, straight lines that all the tailors made conspicuous last summer. It has a black satin cord across the back a little above the waist, which holds the material in, and a piped, or lower part, which fits the hips snugly and reaches half way to the knees.

There are two buttons to fasten it above the waist line in front, and a voluminous collar, square across the back and running to points at the waist. This is made of French gray broadcloth, finished off with a band of black satin, and with an Egyptian design in tubular black braid in the middle of the back.



TAILORED COSTUMES FOR VELVETEEN, WORSTED AND CHEVIOT.

—L'ART DE LA MODE.

FURS FOR THIS SEASON

Are you sure what fur you are wearing? The demand for furs has been so great that there are many cheap furs masquerading as expensive and rare ones.

Marten dyed black is often sold for Russian sable, which is to-day the costliest fur in existence. Much of our ermine is white weasel or white rabbit. Hudson seal is often made from the bellies of muskrats. The fur of the little animal known as musquash when clipped close is often substituted for seal. Otter, too, goes by this same name. Dyed rabbit passes for electric seal. American marten is skunk and much so-called Persian lamb is Chinese goat. Imitation mink is made from marmoset, and in its turn mink passes for sable. Red fox is often dyed for black and dyed skunk or natural raccoon are sold for black fox, which is itself very rare.

Lynx is another fur that plays the part of black fox. Nutria, which has a weak pelt, is sold for otter. Red foxes and badger are dyed and white hairs are added to make a clever substitute for silver fox. Caracul is a Russian lambskin, while astrachan is from Russian sheep. Broadtail is the fur of Persian lamb. The wild horses of Turkistan furnish the pelt we know as ponyskin.

You can often make an excellent bargain in a fur imitation, if you know the qualities of the real fur in the garment. Some of these substitutes are durable and some are not. They are all made to look as beautiful as the originals, so one cannot judge without knowledge of the wearing qualities.

Raccoon is one of the most reliable of furs. Lynx and squirrel are of inferior wearing quality, and the leather of opossum is not strong. Blended mink has a tendency to fade, but natural mink is the most durable of furs, and will give actual service for five years.

The pieces of Russian pony in a garment need renewing often because the skin is so strong that in time it breaks any thread with which it is sewed. The brown beaver of North America is durable.

Marten dyed to look like sable is the best fur substitute which one can invest in, as the wearing qualities of both are about the same.

Marmoset, which the Vienna furriers

have been so successful in bringing out as mink or sable, is of inferior wearing quality. Caracul tears very easily. It is properly the hides of the lambs of astrachan sheep, but it is often dressed for the market from the pelts of Chinese goats.

Caracul must be distinguished from caracul, a small lynx or India with por fur. Edger pelt is durable. Chinilla, although beautiful, is rare and not at all durable. Both the fur and pelt of otter is strong. The Russian squirrel's pelt is very tough. Ermine wears quite well.

Skunk is very durable and its black, silky fur would be immensely valuable if it were not for the slight faint of color. White laces have no thick underwool and the pelt is weak on the leather of the fur of broadtail is very delicate.

The fullest, longest lynx furs are most valuable. A brown shade in silver or ermine, as these furs are becoming rare and are often supplanted by cheaper goods. The poorer furs, marmoset, Chinese goats and lambs, Tartar ponies, weasels, monkeys, foxes, river otters, jackals, etc., and other animals from the warmer zones are going by other names.

Be careful when examining sable, silver or natural black fox, sea otter or ermine, as these furs are becoming rare and are often supplanted by cheaper goods. The poorer furs, marmoset, Chinese goats and lambs, Tartar ponies, weasels, monkeys, foxes, river otters, jackals, etc., and other animals from the warmer zones are going by other names.

The best furs come from the extremely cold regions, and have the finest fur when the animal is killed in the coldest weather. The densest fur of water animals is found on the bellies. Land animals carry their heat fur on their backs. Animals from densely wooded regions have the darkest fur. Natural black skunk, marten, bear, fox, sable, etc., are more valuable than those with lighter streaks or markings.

Aside from the character of the pelt and fur in its natural state, it is also true that the quality of fur depends in a great measure on the condition of the animal when caught, on the methods of handling in the raw state, and the effect of the chemicals necessary in dyeing. All pelts are sent to the manufacturers in a dry state except sealskins, which are pickled for a time in a brine.

New Hair Fillets

Headresses are quite wonderful. Mme. Paquin, Paul Poiret, Beer and many of the other famous costumers are making a specialty of them and are offering them with or without the gown.

There are walls-of-Troy, in rhinestones and set with a white agate at the side, these are two-inch bands of tarnished bullion latticework, set with turquoise and garnet; there are broad bars of black tulle, held by horizontal bars of rhinestones, set in silver-black velvet bands, with a latticework of jewels and a yellow agate at the side.

In addition to all these Oriental fillets there is a wide showing of the fourteenth century Italian caps, in keeping with the sleeves, the shoulder line and the lace ruffles which are revived from the Italian period.

The caps are like those to which we once gave the name of Juliet; they are made of pearls, crystals, turquoises and corals on a white satin or white tulle foundation. As pink is so much the fashion this year among the exclusives, although it is not widely talked about, one sees a good many of these caps made of coral beads strung on coral silk and mounted on a white fabric.

Satin is rather an unusual material for these caps, but it is newer than tulle and looks quite picturesque when it is worn on top of the head, edged with a row of pearls or crystals and cut to sharp points that fall over the hair, which hides the ears.

Yards upon yards—one feels inclined to say miles upon miles—of swansdown are offered at the French shops for trimming every garment on which it can be worn. It borders evening gowns and edges the sleeves and the décolletage, with tiny pink roses just above it.

It trims the chignon and net scarfs for evening, is used for ornamenting hats, is put on the velvet muffs, and is even used for belts on dinner gowns, with tassels made of pink rosebuds in front.

If you would preserve your knives and prevent any risk of their falling into hot water, which so speedily splits the knife from the blade, do not wash them at all, but wipe them first on paper and then on a cloth, to remove all grease before polishing them.

FASHIONABLE SCARFS

Scarves are an important item in the toilet this season. There are designs innumerable, of satin lined with bright-hued silk or the sheerest chiffon lined with satin, of lace, of spangled net, in short, of any article which can be artistically converted into a scarf. Those made of satin and chiffon are gathered into a sort of tassellike bunch at the ends with some sort of a jeweled ornament as a pendant.

The straight satin scarf, which is from nine to twelve inches wide and ten inches long, is not only fashionable and pretty, but serviceable and practical. It may be wound about the throat on a cold day, and it may be arranged to protect the chest.

Some of the newest scarfs are edged with transparent or wooden beads, or a deep band of embroidery. Some have a deep band of fringe and others are finished with a deep hem, above which a fine spray of embroidery spreads out over the scarf, reaching up a foot or more.

Chiffon edged with marabou, velvet lined with satin and trimmed with fur, and a great many other designs are shown. A bright blue moire scarf lined with chinilla, worn with the black tailored gown, is pretty.

Those of heavy, lustrous black satin on one side and white satin on the other, caught together at the ends with a long silk tassel, are the fad for young and old. The white satin scarf edged with swansdown or marabou will be much in evidence as an evening wrap the coming season. The satin scarf, which matches the dress in color, and which is lined with white silk, is also being worn.

The satin scarf made long and trimmed on each side with marabou, may be worn over the shoulders in the daytime, but for evening it can be thrown over the head like a hood and the long ends drawn closely about the neck.

A gorgeous scarf is made of a cream colored satin with great designs at each end embroidered in gold, edged with a fringe about six inches long, made of a golden colored ribbon. One end of Persian silk with a row of black lace down the centre and a band of black satin on either side, the ends

being tied and drawn into a big tassel, is very attractive. A very simple and pretty scarf is made by sewing three strips of marabou upon a broad strip of silver-blue satin messaline. A fringe of marabou finishes the end of the scarf where the satin is gathered to a point. When making a satin scarf, care must be taken to cut straight, or it will not hang well.

A simply made scarf is one of net, run with zephyr and fringed with the same. It is broad and long, and may be used to wear under evening coats like the ordinary chiffon scarf, or on the head. Such scarfs are very useful, too, in the house to throw over the shoulder when wearing a low-cut bodice. They are made of figured nets, and may be as broad as one wishes, from one-third to three-quarters of a yard being the width. The length may vary from one to two yards. In selecting the net, a stout, well made material with firm thread and clear, fairly large meshes should be chosen. The zephyr, wool or silk is run through the meshes across the scarf. The running is done so that the design is brought out the most effectively. The zephyr or rope silk is used in making the fringe which adorns the ends. The scarf may be any color, or combination of colors desired, but those made with white, cream or ecru net are the most favored. They are usually run with pale pink, lavender or blue. Gray net run with pale lavender, is pretty for an elderly woman.

The Eastern scarfs are of crepe de chine worked in the jeweled embroideries of the East Indies. A beautiful one is of fuchsia purple crepe covered with a mosaic design in colored gems and silk in rose and old blue tones. Handsome effects in beaded borders are among the latest novelties, as are also those elaborated with colored embroideries in silk, wool, chenille, lace and gold and silver threads.

Wide, finely knitted woolen scarfs are again very fashionable. They are fastened together in the centre with buttons to form a hood at will. At the ends is a frill of double mousseline de sole with a very full heading. In all pale tints these scarfs are charming, and they are light, easy work, should one wish to make her own scarf.

Just a Suggestion

The "end-seat hog," to be very slangy and straight to the point, is like the poor, always with us, and to be dreadfully frank about the matter, you find that ever so much oftener than otherwise it's a woman. Perhaps the sun is shining in on her side of the car, or raining, which is not often the case, and the window down. But there she sits as serenely in the middle of the seat, as if it were her own coach and foil with a footman up behind.

If approached on the subject, no doubt she would raise her level eyes to a shining blue heaven at the very thought. She has perfectly good reasons. She doesn't like sun—no, probably not—and she really intended to get out three squares back, there was some lace to be mended, but she decided later to go on further down town and have tea with a friend, and there you are. Somebody stands in the aisle and blocks the way for others with the blackest kind of thoughts chasing themselves through his brain and directly toward the unconscious back of the person, in question, taking a whole seat when the law wouldn't give her but half, not even on an appeal.

It is sometimes mere thoughtlessness, again it is directly intended, and the person ensconced in the seat gives you a healthy stare at the seeming intrusion of her own private property and possession. She not only does not move over at all, but forces you to sit partly suspended in the aisle to be buffeted by all who pass to rear your own sunny soul with feelings of undying hatred for the woman who has made you endure it.

It just looks so little and small and it means the mind under the puffs and hat and veil is very narrow and simple, if indeed there exists one at all. And women do not stop to reckon that it is the smaller courtesies in public places where you are probably entirely unknown, that stamp one with the marks of gentility and good breeding.

A time has been noted and recorded when the "end seat hog" moved over into the middle seat, but it was upon a rare occasion and the days are many, and the animal as yet plentiful in variety and action.

The Best Petticoat

For a petticoat to wear under the plain narrow skirt of the winter cloth suit a heavy China silk, in a shade matching the suit, is one of the best materials possible. Taffeta, because of its rustle, is no longer considered smart, while the soft satin skirts do not wear well. There is practically no weight to the China silk, and it wears forever. Some of the skirts are made merely with a wide hem, while a scant ruffle or flounce, with a few pin tucks, forms a trimming on others.

Jugs for Flowers

The girl who likes a few growing things around her, no matter how simple they are, should not bother about procuring handsome vases. She should take up the new fancy for using old English beer jugs. They are made in America as well as in England, and have all sorts of pictures on them from Westminster Abbey, in London, to the Independence Hall, in Philadelphia.

The jugs are low and broad and have wonderful coloring. They come in purple, in green and in brown, and sell for reasonable prices.

Novelty Abroad

The lac train which Queen Mary is to wear at the durbar is a coronation gift of the women of Belfast, and was made in Presentation Convent, at Toughton.

Measuring the regulation four yards of a court train in length, it is two yards wide at one end, and narrows gradually to fit between the shoulders.

The threads composing this exquisite piece of lace are as fine as those of a spider's web. An intricate design of fuchsia and roses runs lengthwise on the train.

Fifty convent workers were engaged in manufacturing the lace, and their labors covered a period of six months. The festivities will last until January 2, when their majesties will embark for the homeward journey, reaching England at the end of the month.

Forward on the spar deck of the Medina are the suites of cabins set apart from the King and Queen. Each contains a stateroom about twenty-two feet long and ten feet wide, and a bathroom which will be twelve by eighteen feet. The Queen's suite is on the starboard side and the King's on the port side. The beds are silver plated, and adjoining couches have been provided for use in rough weather.

The Queen's suite is paneled in white, with furniture of blond satinwood. In the stateroom there are specially designed writing tables, bookcases, and cabinets, while the settees and chairs are upholstered in green and white striped silk. In the King's suite the chief differences are that the carpets and the furniture are of a darker shade of green and that the furniture is mahogany instead of satinwood.

Between the suites runs the stairway which leads to the music room and divan on the hurricane deck. It is paneled in light oak, gray pine carvings on the floor, and the upholstery and hangings are of a most agreeable light blue. The decorations of the walls of the room are carried out with allegorical figures representing dawn, light, sea, and sky.

The dining saloon spanned in oak, stamped with the King's monogram, beneath which is a large table, a center table, which may be divided into smaller tables. There are also six circular tables near the ports. Armchairs of satinwood are fitted to all the tables, with coverings of cream linen, bordered with the royal blue.

The ship's company of the Medina, which numbers 524 human beings, includes two cows from the dairies at Windsor, and the King's pet terrier.

Throughout the ship there are electric fans and electric heaters, and the other incidents of the modern furnishings are just as up to the moment.

To meet the different conditions in India the Queen's hats and toques have all been designed to shade her face as much as possible. In a variety of different delicate shades of silk, some lace-covered or edged, some hand-painted are a number of styles.

Among several cases of jewels, the Queen will take the diamond crown she wore at the coronation. It has set in it the Koh-i-noor—Exchange.

For the Housewife

If you wish to give your table glass crystal bright and shining, wash it in warm water with black soap. You will find the result quite wonderful. The glasses should be dried when warm and a final polish should be given with silk paper.